DC
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"WITHIN THESE WALLS... ARMAGEDDON!"
MASTERS
OF THE UNIVERSE
ALL NEW!
60¢
NO. 3
FEB.
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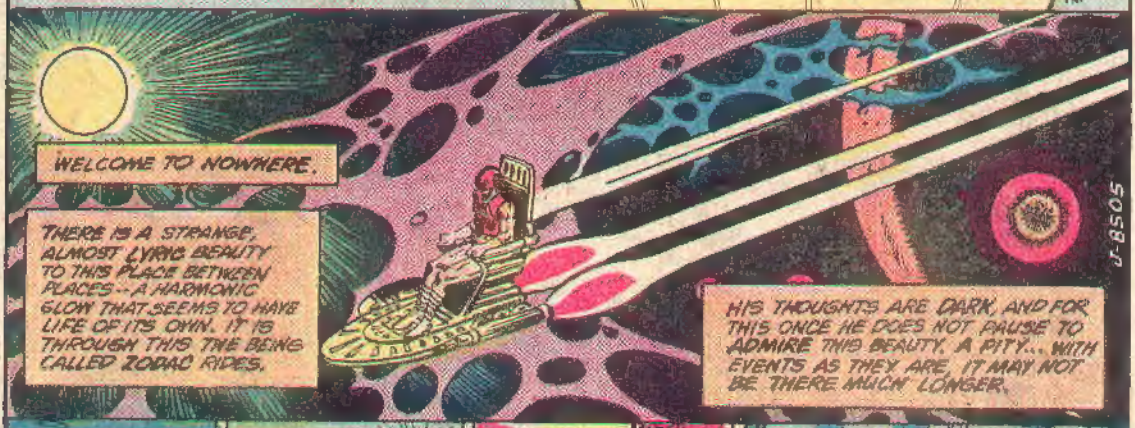
HE-MAN... BATTLE CAT... MAN-AT-ARMS... TEELA... STRATOS... THEY ARE AMONG THE MIGHTIEST HEROES ON A WORLD WHERE SCIENCE AND MAGIC MELD TO FORM HEROES AND VILLAINS UNIMAGINED BY US. THEY ARE...

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE™


WELCOME TO NOWHERE.
THERE IS A STRANGE, ALMOST LYRIC BEAUTY TO THIS PLACE BETWEEN PLACES--A HARMONIC GLOW THAT SEEMS TO HAVE LIFE OF ITS OWN. IT IS THROUGH THIS TIME BEING CALLED ZODAC RIDES.
HIS THOUGHTS ARE DARK, AND FOR THIS ONCE HE DOES NOT PAUSE TO ADMIRE THIS BEAUTY. A PITY... WITH EVENTS AS THEY ARE, IT MAY NOT BE THERE MUCH' LONGER.
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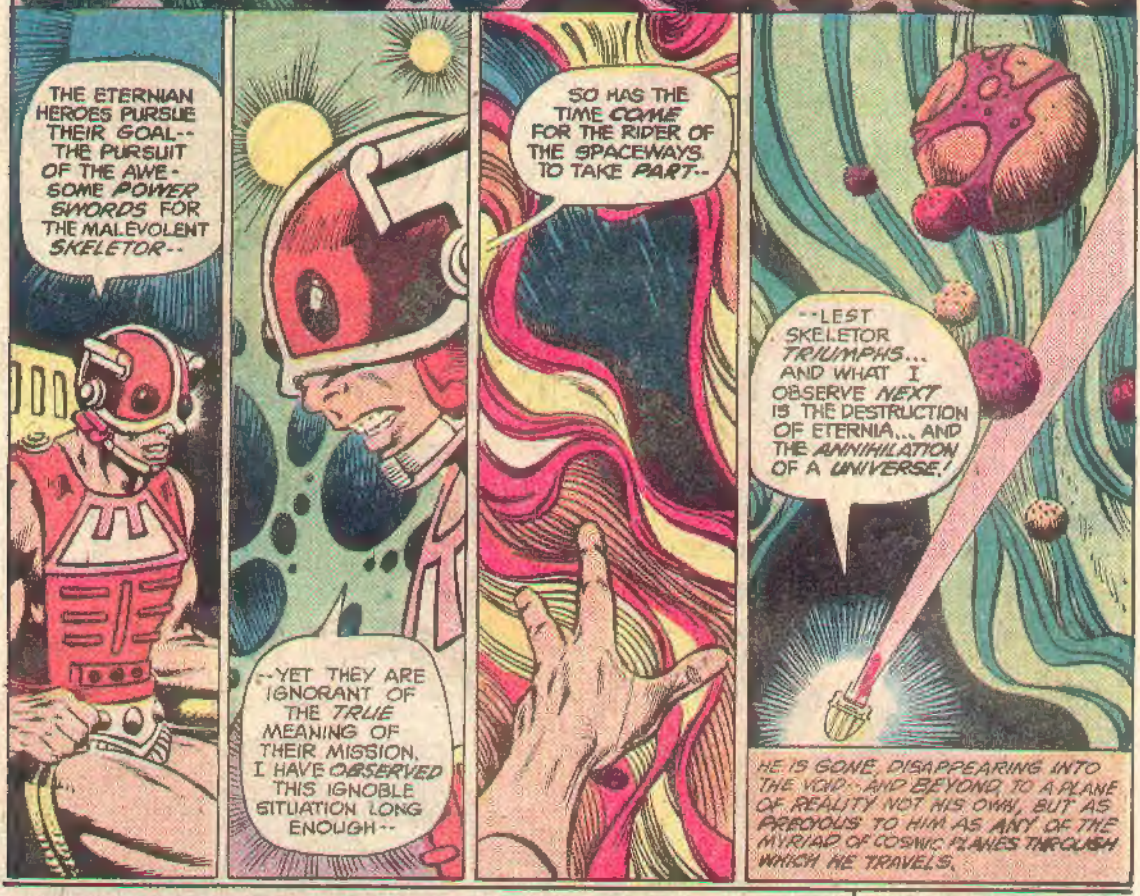
THE ETERNIAN HEROES PURSUE THEIR GOAL--THE PURSUIT OF THE AWE-SOME POWER SWORDS FOR THE MALEVOLENT SKELETOR--
--YET THEY ARE IGNORANT OF THE TRUE MEANING OF THEIR MISSION. I HAVE OBSERVED THIS IGNOBLE SITUATION LONG ENOUGH--
SO HAS THE TIME COME FOR THE RIDER OF THE SPACEWAYS TO TAKE PART--
--LEST SKELETOR TRIUMPHS... AND WHAT I OBSERVE NEXT IS THE DESTRUCTION OF ETERNIA... AND THE ANNIHILATION OF A UNIVERSE!
HE IS GONE, DISAPPEARING INTO THE VOID--AND BEYOND, TO A PLANE OF REALITY NOT HIS OWN, BUT AS PRECIOUS TO HIM AS ANY OF THE MYRIAD OF COSMIC PLANES THROUGH WHICH HE TRAVELS.

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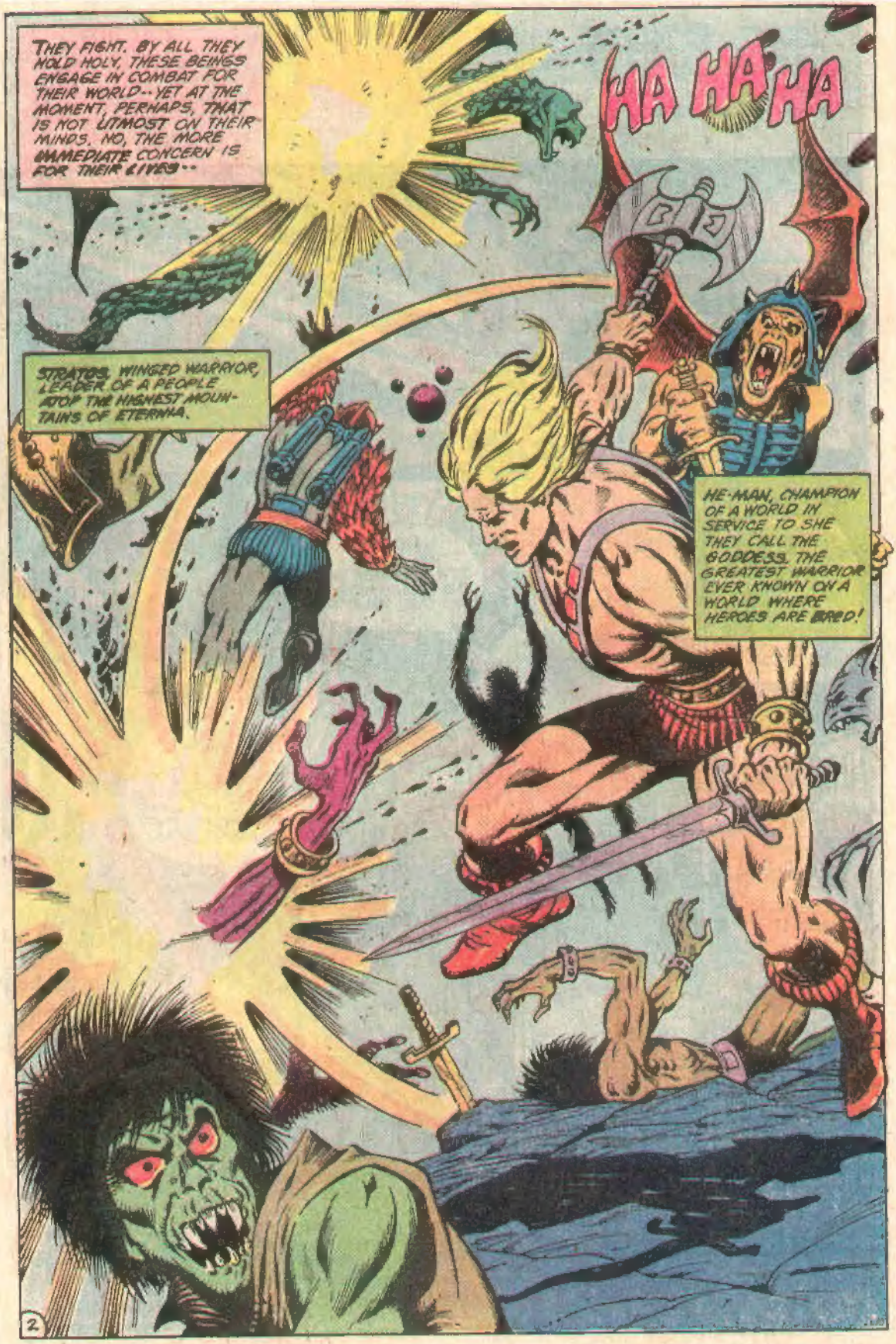
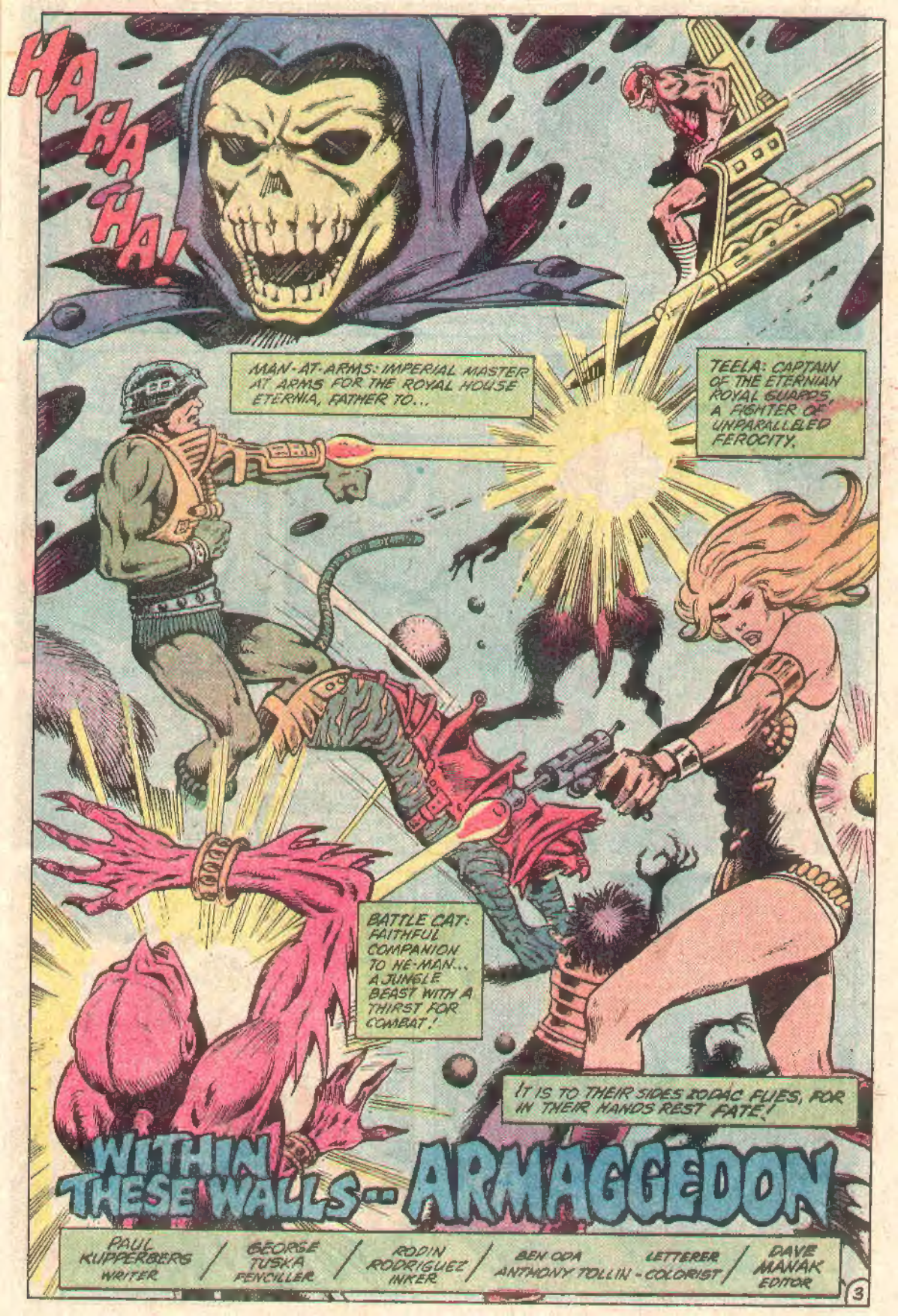

THEY FIGHT. BY ALL THEY HOLD HOLY, THESE BEINGS ENGAGE IN COMBAT FOR THEIR WORLD--YET AT THE MOMENT, PERHAPS, THAT IS NOT UTMOST ON THEIR MINDS. NO, THE MORE IMMEDIATE CONCERN IS FOR THEIR LIVES--
HA HA HA
STRATOS, WINGED WARRIOR, LEADER OF A PEOPLE ATOP THE HIGHEST MOUNTAINS OF ETERNIA.
HE-MAN, CHAMPION OF A WORLD IN SERVICE TO SHE THEY CALL THE GODDESS, THE GREATEST WARRIOR EVER KNOWN ON A WORLD WHERE HEROES ARE BRED!


HA HA HA!
MAN-AT-ARMS: IMPERIAL MASTER AT ARMS FOR THE ROYAL HOUSE ETERNIA, FATHER TO...
TEELA: CAPTAIN OF THE ETERNIAN ROYAL GUARDS, A FIGHTER OF UNPARALLELED FEROCITY.
BATTLE CAT: FAITHFUL COMPANION TO HE-MAN... A JUNGLE BEAST WITH A THIRST FOR COMBAT!
IT IS TO THEIR SIDES ZODAC FLIES, FOR IN THEIR HANDS REST FATE!
WITHIN THESE WALLS... ARMAGGEDON
PAUL KUPPERBERG WRITER / GEORGE TUSKA PENCILLER / RODIN RODRIGUEZ INKER / BEN ODA ANTHONY TOLLIN - COLORIST / LETTERER / DAVE MANAK EDITOR
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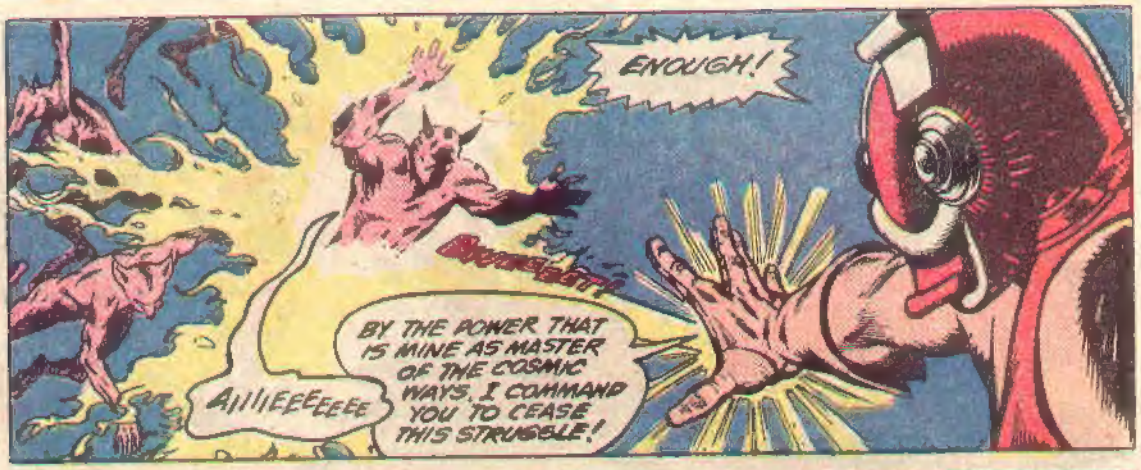

NO, FRIEND HE-MAN!
SO, ZODAC-- NOW YOU CHOOSE TO SHOW YOURSELF, EH? BUT WHERE WERE YOU WHILE SKELETOR WAS ABDUCTING THE GODDESS TO FORCE OUR COOPERATION IN RETURN FOR HER CONTINUED LIFE?

DO NOT JUDGE ME BY MATTERS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I AM ZODAC... I DO WHAT I MUST--NO MORE...NO LESS!
YOU ARE THE HANDY ONE TO HAVE ABOUT WHEN THERE ARE DEMONS TO BE DRIVEN OFF, I'LL GRANT YOU THAT!

WELL, I'M NOT IMPRESSED, MISTER! NOT WHILE SKELETOR'S RUNNING FREE TO GAIN POWER OVER ETERNIA--!
YOUR CONCERN IS UNDERSTANDABLE, TEELA... BUT WOULD YOU STILL DEMAND MY AID IF YOU KNEW IT COULD JEOPARDIZE THE GODDESS--
-- OR MORE?

WHAT DANGER COULD BE WORSE THAN SKELETOR, SPACE-RIDER-- ESPECIALLY NOW THAT WE HOLD THE THREE MAGICAL TALISMANS THAT WILL LEAD US TO THE TWIN HALVES OF THE SWORD HIDDEN FROM HIM BY THE GODDESS?

THINK, HE-MAN... WHO SENT THESE CREATURES FROM HELL TO BAR YOUR WAY? HARDLY, SKELETOR--
-- FOR WOULD IT NOT BE FOOLISH OF HIM TO TRY AND STOP YOU FROM COMPLETING A QUEST ON WHICH HE HIMSELF SENT YOU!

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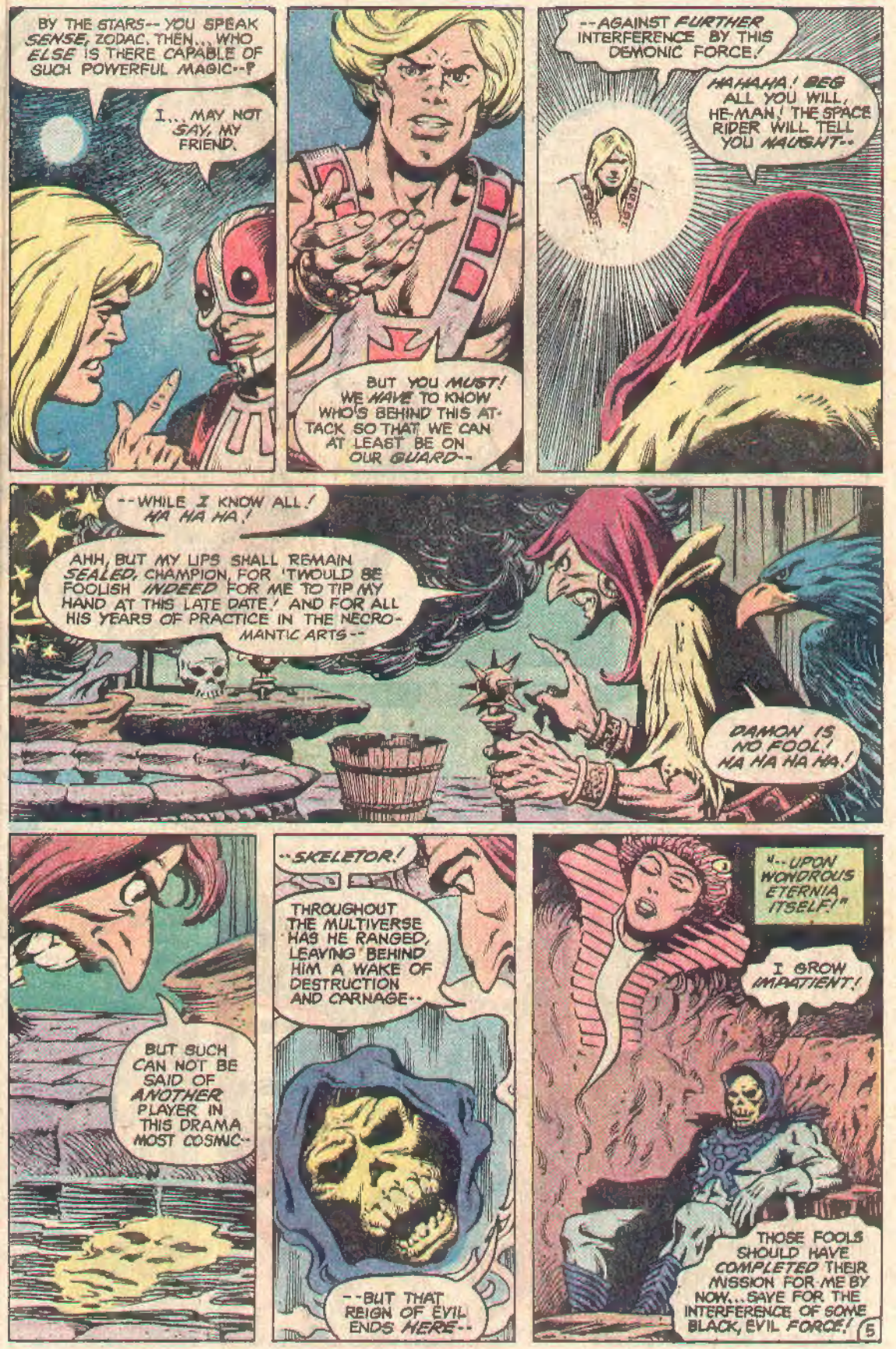
BY THE STARS-- YOU SPEAK SENSE, ZODAC. THEN... WHO ELSE IS THERE CAPABLE OF SUCH POWERFUL MAGIC--?
I... MAY NOT SAY, MY FRIEND.
BUT YOU MUST! WE HAVE TO KNOW WHO'S BEHIND THIS ATTACK SO THAT WE CAN AT LEAST BE ON OUR GUARD--
--AGAINST FURTHER INTERFERENCE BY THIS DEMONIC FORCE!
HAHAHA! BEG ALL YOU WILL, HE-MAN! THE SPACE RIDER WILL TELL YOU NAUGHT--
--WHILE I KNOW ALL! HA HA HA!
AHH, BUT MY LIPS SHALL REMAIN SEALED, CHAMPION, FOR 'TWOULD BE FOOLISH INDEED FOR ME TO TIP MY HAND AT THIS LATE DATE! AND FOR ALL HIS YEARS OF PRACTICE IN THE NECROMANTIC ARTS--
DAMON IS NO FOOL! HA HA HA HA!
BUT SUCH CAN NOT BE SAID OF ANOTHER PLAYER IN THIS DRAMA MOST COSMIC--
--SKELETOR!
THROUGHOUT THE MULTIVERSE HAS HE RANGED, LEAVING BEHIND HIM A WAKE OF DESTRUCTION AND CARNAGE--
--BUT THAT REIGN OF EVIL ENDS HERE--
"--UPON WONDROUS ETERNIA ITSELF!"
I GROW IMPATIENT!
THOSE FOOLS SHOULD HAVE COMPLETED THEIR MISSION FOR ME BY NOW... SAVE FOR THE INTERFERENCE OF SOME BLACK, EVIL FORCE!

WONDER ON, DEMONIC SLAYER OF WORLDS! YOUR "CHAMPIONS" SEEK THE SWORDS WHICH COULD MEAN THE DEATH OF ETERNIA--
--OR ITS CONQUEST! DAMN THE GODDESS, THAT SHE SHOULD HAVE PUT THOSE SELFSAME SWORD-HALVES IN AN IM-PENETRABLE STASIS FIELD WITHIN MY VERY SIGHT--
--YET DENIED ME BY A POWER SUPERIOR TO MY OWN!
THOK!
BUT I WILL HAVE THEM, DO YOU HEAR, GODDESS?
I WILL HAVE THEM!
ELSEWHERE:
THIS IS NO TIME TO PAUSE, MY FRIENDS. FOR NOW YOU FACE MENACE ON TWO FRONTS... AGAINST THE UNKNOWN FORCE SEEKING TO STOP YOU--
--AND THE THREAT POSED BY SKELETOR ONCE YOU SUCCEED IN GAINING POSSESSION OF THE POWER SWORD! IT IS YOUR GOOD FORTUNE THAT HALF YOUR TROU-BLES ARE EASILY SOLVED--
--FOR WITH THESE YOU MAY BYPASS ANY PERIL PLACED BEFORE YOU. THESE TALISMANS YOU HAVE ACQUIRED ARE LINKED MAGICALLY WITH THE SWORD--
--AND WITH THE PROP-ER KNOWLEDGE DENIED EVEN SKELETOR, YOU MAY GO DIRECTLY TO THEM!
UHH... ACTUALLY, ZODAC... NONE OF US KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THE BLASTED THINGS.
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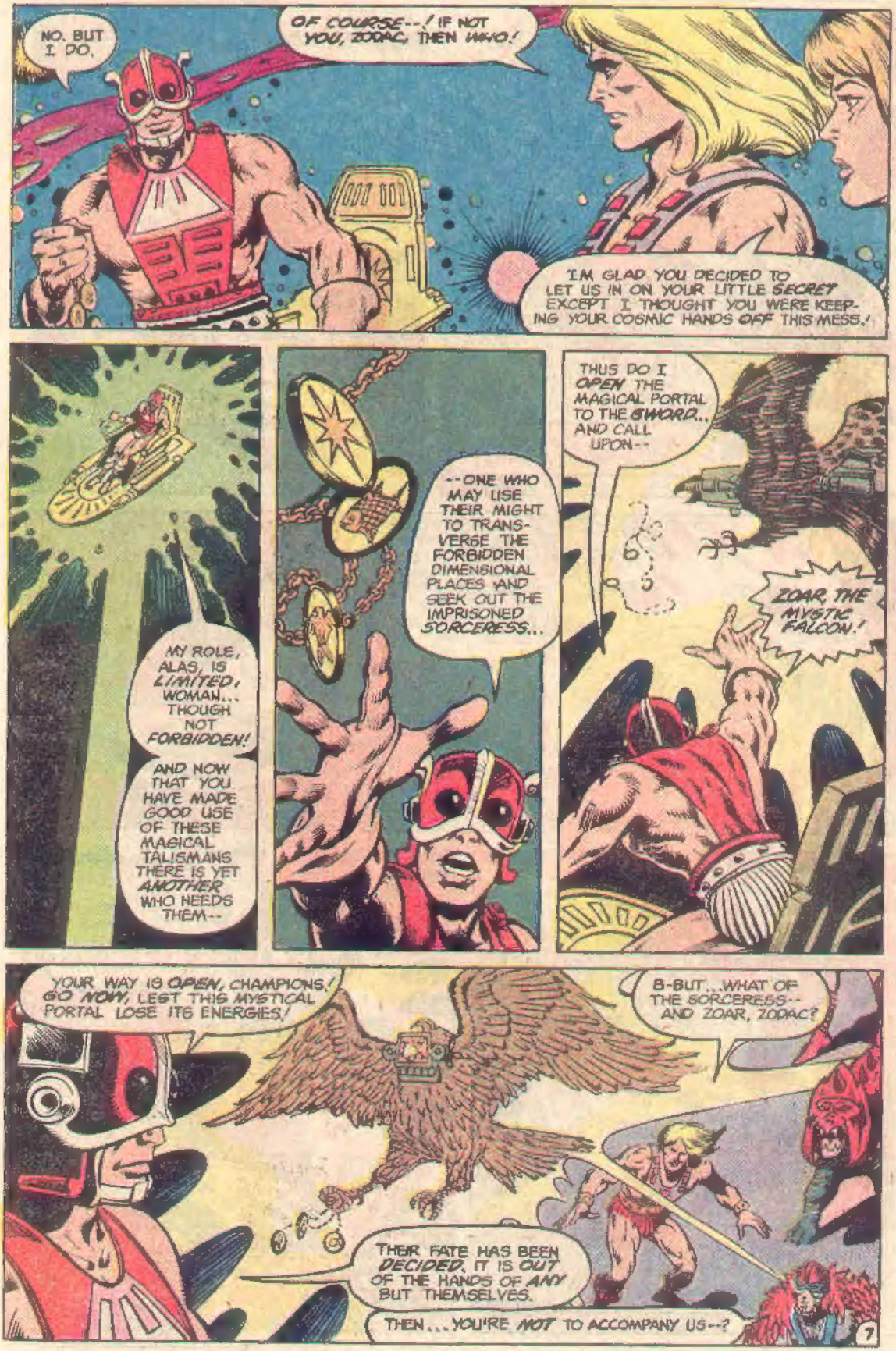
NO. BUT I DO.
OF COURSE--! IF NOT YOU, ZODAC, THEN WHO!
I'M GLAD YOU DECIDED TO LET US IN ON YOUR LITTLE SECRET EXCEPT I THOUGHT YOU WERE KEEPING YOUR COSMIC HANDS OFF THIS MESS.!
MY ROLE, ALAS, IS LIMITED, WOMAN... THOUGH NOT FORBIDDEN!
AND NOW THAT YOU HAVE MADE GOOD USE OF THESE MAGICAL TALISMANS THERE IS YET ANOTHER WHO NEEDS THEM--
--ONE WHO MAY USE THEIR MIGHT TO TRANSVERSE THE FORBIDDEN DIMENSIONAL PLACES AND SEEK OUT THE IMPRISONED SORCERESS...
THUS DO I OPEN THE MAGICAL PORTAL TO THE SWORD... AND CALL UPON--
ZOAR, THE MYSTIC FALCON!
YOUR WAY IS OPEN, CHAMPIONS! GO NOW, LEST THIS MYSTICAL PORTAL LOSE ITS ENERGIES!
B-BUT...WHAT OF THE SORCERESS-- AND ZOAR, ZODAC?
THEIR FATE HAS BEEN DECIDED, IT IS OUT OF THE HANDS OF ANY BUT THEMSELVES.
THEN... YOU'RE NOT TO ACCOMPANY US--?
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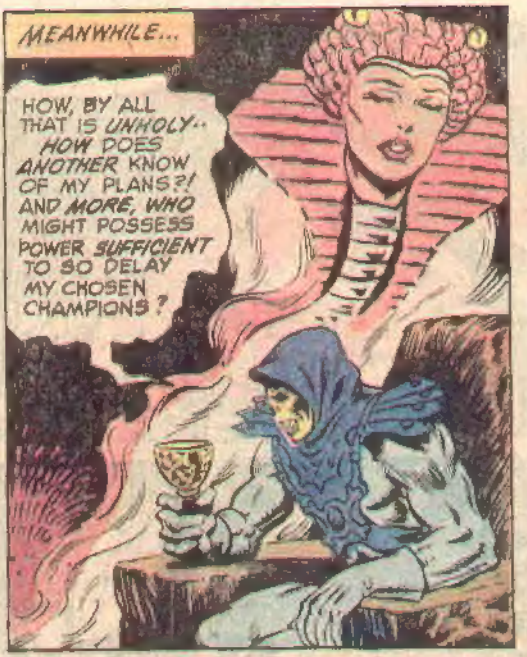
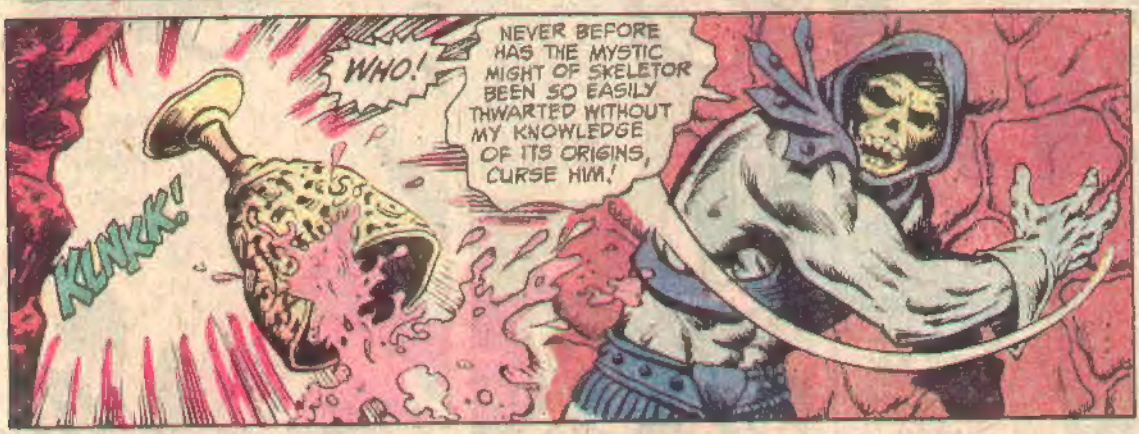
I DARE NOT, MY FRIEND. I AM BUT TO POINT THE WAY... THE REST IS IN YOUR HANDS.
MAY THE STARS WATCH OVER YOU.
REALITY SHIFTS ABOUT ZODAC AND HE IS GONE.


MEANWHILE...
HOW, BY ALL THAT IS UNHOLY.. HOW DOES ANOTHER KNOW OF MY PLANS?! AND MORE, WHO MIGHT POSSESS POWER SUFFICIENT TO SO DELAY MY CHOSEN CHAMPIONS?


WHO!
NEVER BEFORE HAS THE MYSTIC MIGHT OF SKELETOR BEEN SO EASILY THWARTED WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE OF ITS ORIGINS, CURSE HIM!
KLNKK!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

AWOK!
--BUT BEFORE YOUR LAUGHTER CARRIES YOU AWAY, REMEMBER WHO I AM--
--REMEMBER I AM THE POWER--
BWAM!
--I AM SKELETOR!
SO... DAMON!
I HAD THOUGHT I ENDED YOUR THREAT WHEN FIRST I ARRIVED UPON THIS MISERABLE PLANE!
OH--THAT! 'TWAS BUT A... TEMPORARY INCONVENIENCE. YOU DON'T THINK I'D REMAIN ENTRAPPED WHILE YOU SOUGHT TO DESTROY THE WORLD OF MY BIRTH--
--A WORLD, I MIGHT ADD, I WISH WISH TO CONQUER AND RULE WITH THE SELFSAME POWER SWORDS YOU WOULD USE FOR DESTRUCTION.
OH NO, USURPER FROM THE DARK PLANES...ETERNIA IS MINE! I ADVISE YOU NOW TO MOVE ON. THERE ARE PLENTY OF UNIVERSES MUCH LESS RESISTANT TO YOUR MIGHT, RIPE FOR CONQUEST AND ANNIHILATION.
SO TRUE, HUMAN-- BUT THEY BORE ME. I WANT ETERNIA.
I SHALL HAVE IT!
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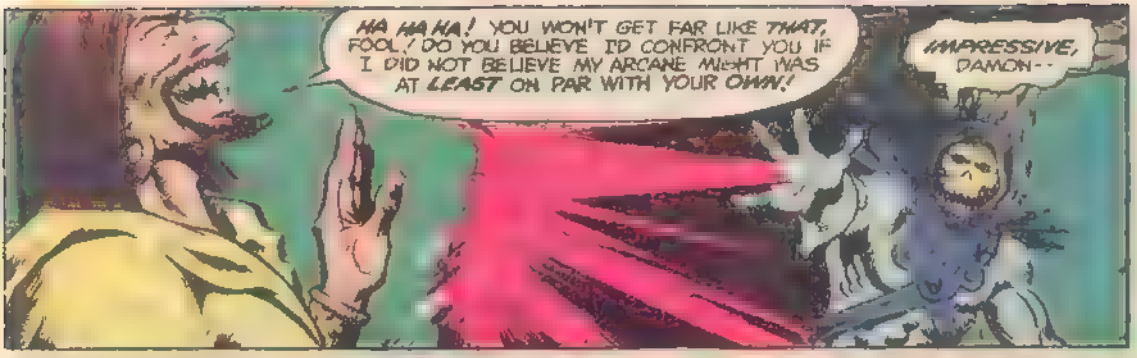
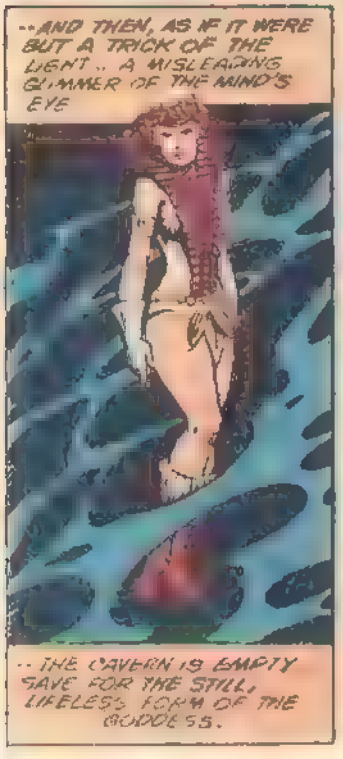
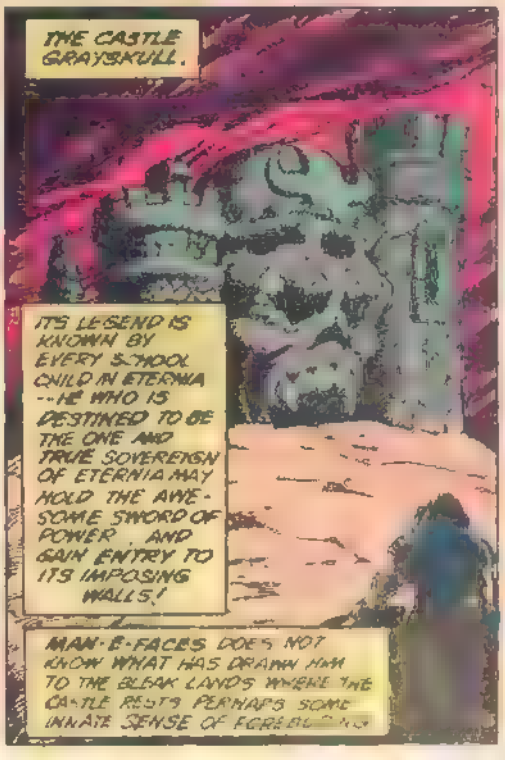

HA HA HA! YOU WON'T GET FAR LIKE THAT, FOOL! DO YOU BELIEVE I'D CONFRONT YOU IF I DID NOT BELIEVE MY ARCANE MIGHT WAS AT LEAST ON PAR WITH YOUR OWN!
IMPRESSIVE, DAMON--

--YET I THINK I'D MUCH PREFER TO SPILL YOUR BLOOD WITH MY OWN HAND RATHER THAN WASTE PRECIOUS MAGICAL ENERGIES! A SWORD IS SO MUCH MORE... PERSONAL. DON'T YOU AGREE?
AYE... AND MUCH MORE FUTILE AS WELL!

SKELETOR ONLY LAUGHS, AN ANIMAL LIKE GROWL THAT DEEPENS INTO A ROAR OF RAGE UNLEASHED AS HE LUNGES TOWARD HIS FOE THEY CLASH--AND THE WORLD SEEMS TO GO DARK FOR THE BRIEFEST OF MOMENTS--

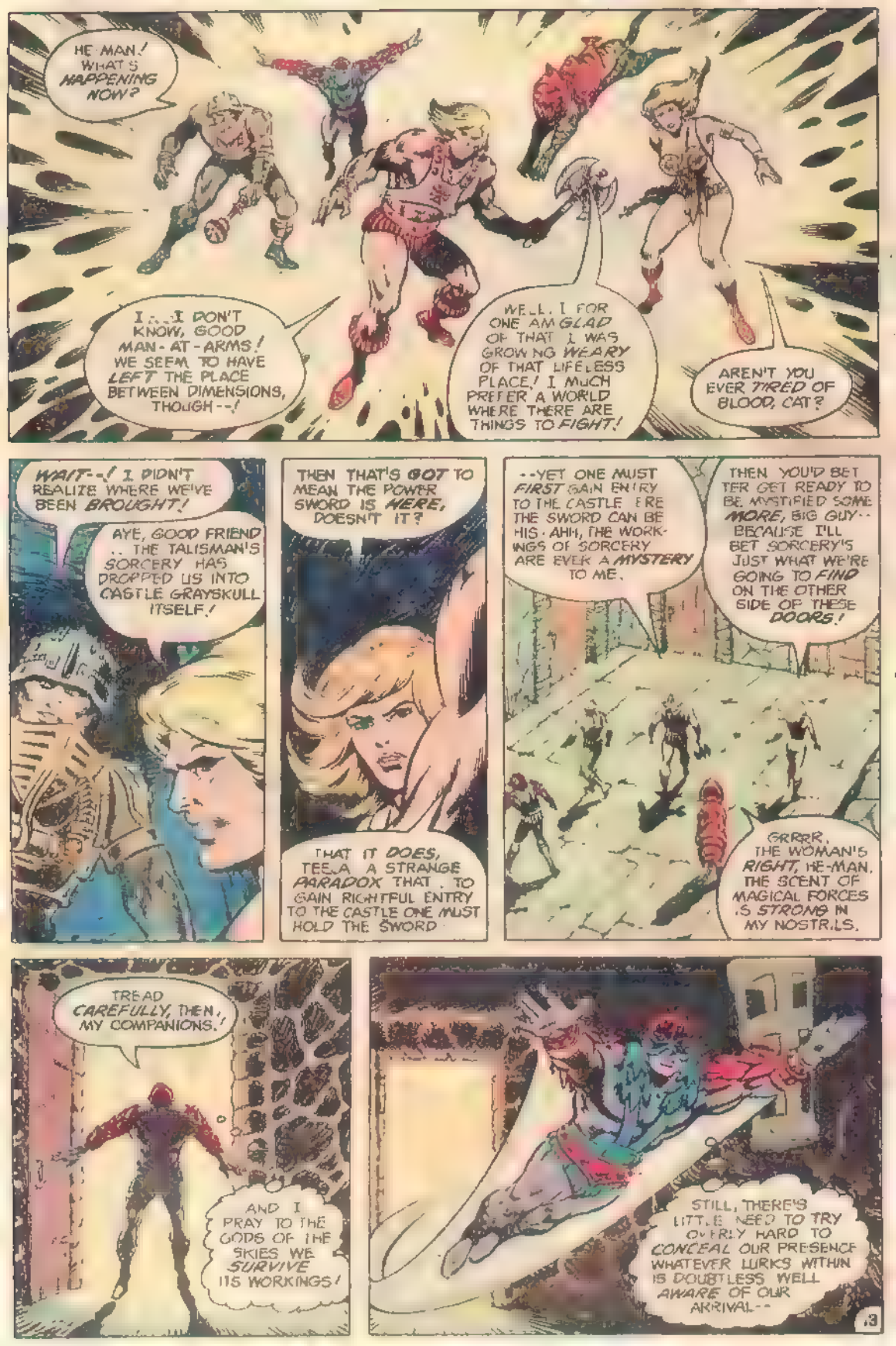

--AND THEN, AS IF IT WERE BUT A TRICK OF THE LIGHT.. A MISLEADING GLIMMER OF THE MIND'S EYE
--THE CAVERN IS EMPTY SAVE FOR THE STILL, LIFELESS FORM OF THE GODDESS.


THE CASTLE GRAYSKULL.
ITS LEGEND IS KNOWN BY EVERY SCHOOL CHILD IN ETERNIA --HE WHO IS DESTINED TO BE THE ONE AND TRUE SOVEREIGN OF ETERNIA MAY HOLD THE AWESOME SWORD OF POWER AND GAIN ENTRY TO ITS IMPOSING WALLS!
MAN-E-FACES DOES NOT KNOW WHAT HAS DRAWN HIM TO THE BLEAK LANDS WHERE THE CASTLE RESTS PERHAPS SOME INNATE SENSE OF FORE

YET, WHATEVER BE THE CAUSE, THIS ETERNIAN KNOWS HE MUST STAY WHERE HE IS FOR NOW. THE TIME WILL COME WHEN HIS PART IN WHAT IS TO TRANSPIRE IS MADE CLEAR.
HE WILL WAIT

HE IS NOT DESTINED TO LINGER FOR LONG WITHOUT ACTION! FOR SUDDENLY, THE SKY THAT IS ALWAYS LIKE NIGHT, EXPLODES IN BRILLIANT FLASHES OF ETHEREAL HUES--
--AND THE CASTLE GRAYSKULL AWAKENS--
LIGHTNING AND ENERGY FILLS THE AIR, AND MAN-E-FACES CAN SMELL THE UNWHOLESOME STENCH OF BRIMSTONE THAT SIGNALS THERE IS SORCERY AFOOT! YET HE DOES NOT HAVE TIME TO PONDER THE SIGNIFICENCE OF THAT DISCOVERY--
--FOR IN THE NEXT INSTANCE, THE CASTLE SEEMS TO REACH FORTH AND DRAW HIM INTO ITS DARK INTERIOR.
THE LEGENDS NOTWITHSTANDING, HE IS NOT ALONE!
EH--?! WHAT TRANSPIRES--?!
TRIUMPH, SKELETOR--
--AS I KNEW MUST COME TO ME.. ONCE OUR RESPECTIVE MAGICS WERE JOINED AS ONE SO THAT WE MIGHT TRAVEL TOGETHER THROUGH PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN DIMENSIONAL-CORRIDORS--
--TO THE ONE PORTAL WHICH LEADS STRAIGHT TO THE HEART OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL! HA HA HA!

BUT ALLOW ME TO SATISFY YOUR CURIOSITY BEFORE I SLAY YOU, DEMON! LONG AGO, I DISCOVERED THE ONLY METHOD OF REACHING THE POWER SWORD WAS THROUGH A MYSTICAL WARP WITHIN THIS CASTLE--
-- BUT HOW THEN WAS I TO BREACH THESE IMPENETRABLE WALLS TO REACH IT? THE LEGENDS SAY ONLY THOSE WORTHY MAY GAIN ACCESS... AND, ALAS, NEITHER OF US FIT THAT DESCRIPTION.
SO YOU TRICKED ME, EH? GOADED ME TO THE ATTACK SO THAT WE COULD JOIN TOGETHER AND TRANSVERSE AN OTHERWISE INSURMOUNTABLE BARRIER?
OR DID YOU THINK YOU POSSESSED KNOWLEDGE I DID NOT? HA HA HA!
YOU DO NOT REALIZE THE TORMENT IT CAUSED ME TO FEIGN IGNORANCE OF YOUR PLAN, LEST YOU BE OBSERVING ME.
STILL, IT WAS WORTH A BIT OF MY PRIDE TO HAVE, AT LAST, REACHED MY GOAL! AND NOW THAT THIS IS DONE, I CAN BE RID OF YOUR JUVENILE ANTICS--
--WHILE PAYING BACK JUST A LITTLE OF THE GNOBILITY! HA HA HA!
ELSEWHERE, AMONG THE DARK, TWISTED FOLIAGE THAT SITS UNTENDED IN THE CASTLE'S COURTYARD.


HE-MAN! WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?
I...I DON'T KNOW, GOOD MAN-AT-ARMS! WE SEEM TO HAVE LEFT THE PLACE BETWEEN DIMENSIONS, THOUGH--!
WELL, I FOR ONE AM GLAD OF THAT. I WAS GROWING WEARY OF THAT LIFELESS PLACE! I MUCH PREFER A WORLD WHERE THERE ARE THINGS TO FIGHT!
AREN'T YOU EVER TIRED OF BLOOD, CAT?
WAIT--! I DIDN'T REALIZE WHERE WE'VE BEEN BROUGHT!
AYE, GOOD FRIEND.. THE TALISMAN'S SORCERY HAS DROPPED US INTO CASTLE GRAYSKULL ITSELF!
THEN THAT'S GOT TO MEAN THE POWER SWORD IS HERE, DOESN'T IT?
THAT IT DOES, TEELA. A STRANGE PARADOX THAT. TO GAIN RIGHTFUL ENTRY TO THE CASTLE ONE MUST HOLD THE SWORD
--YET ONE MUST FIRST GAIN ENTRY TO THE CASTLE ERE THE SWORD CAN BE HIS. AHH, THE WORKINGS OF SORCERY ARE EVER A MYSTERY TO ME.
THEN YOU'D BETTER GET READY TO BE MYSTIFIED SOME MORE, BIG GUY-- BECAUSE I'LL BET SORCERY'S JUST WHAT WE'RE GOING TO FIND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THESE DOORS!
GRRRR. THE WOMAN'S RIGHT, HE-MAN. THE SCENT OF MAGICAL FORCES IS STRONG IN MY NOSTRILS.
TREAD CAREFULLY, THEN, MY COMPANIONS.!
AND I PRAY TO THE GODS OF THE SKIES WE SURVIVE ITS WORKINGS!
STILL, THERE'S LITTLE NEED TO TRY OVERLY HARD TO CONCEAL OUR PRESENCE. WHATEVER LURKS WITHIN IS DOUBTLESS WELL AWARE OF OUR ARRIVAL--
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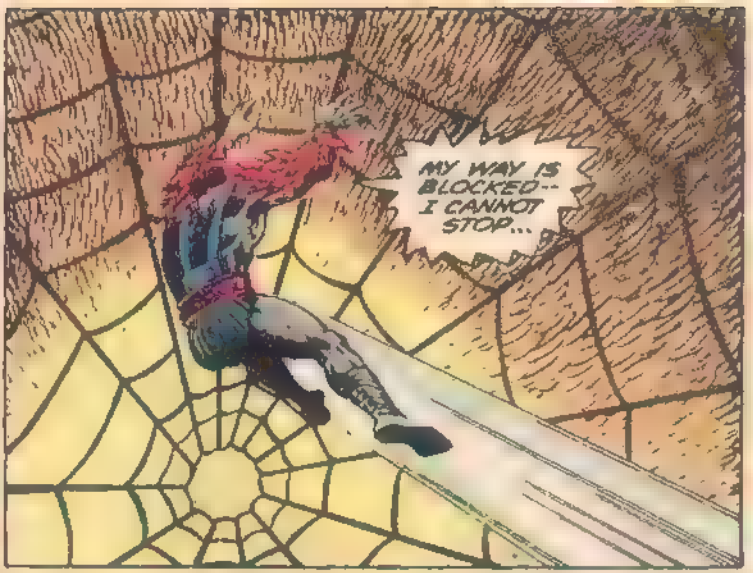
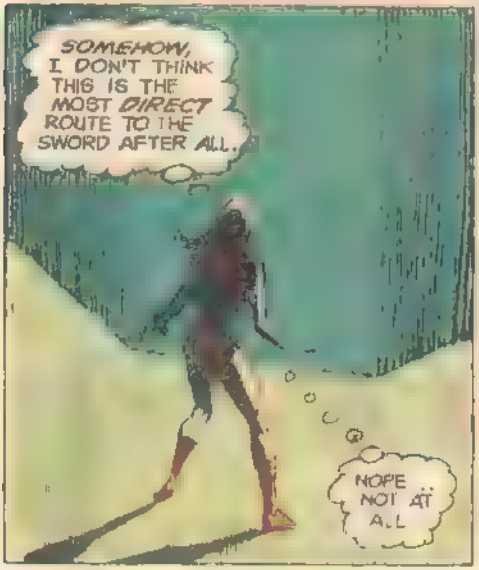
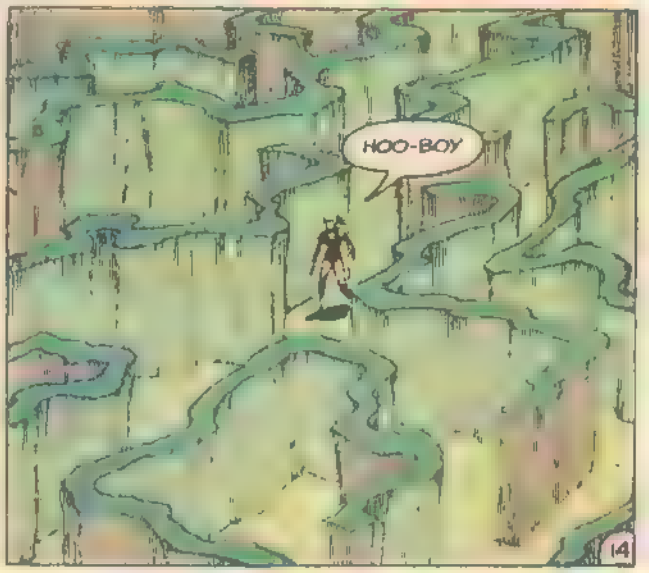
-- AND HIS TRAPS, NO DOUBT ALREADY LAID!
HOLD! SOMETHING'S AMISS... AHEAD!


MY WAY IS BLOCKED-- I CANNOT STOP...

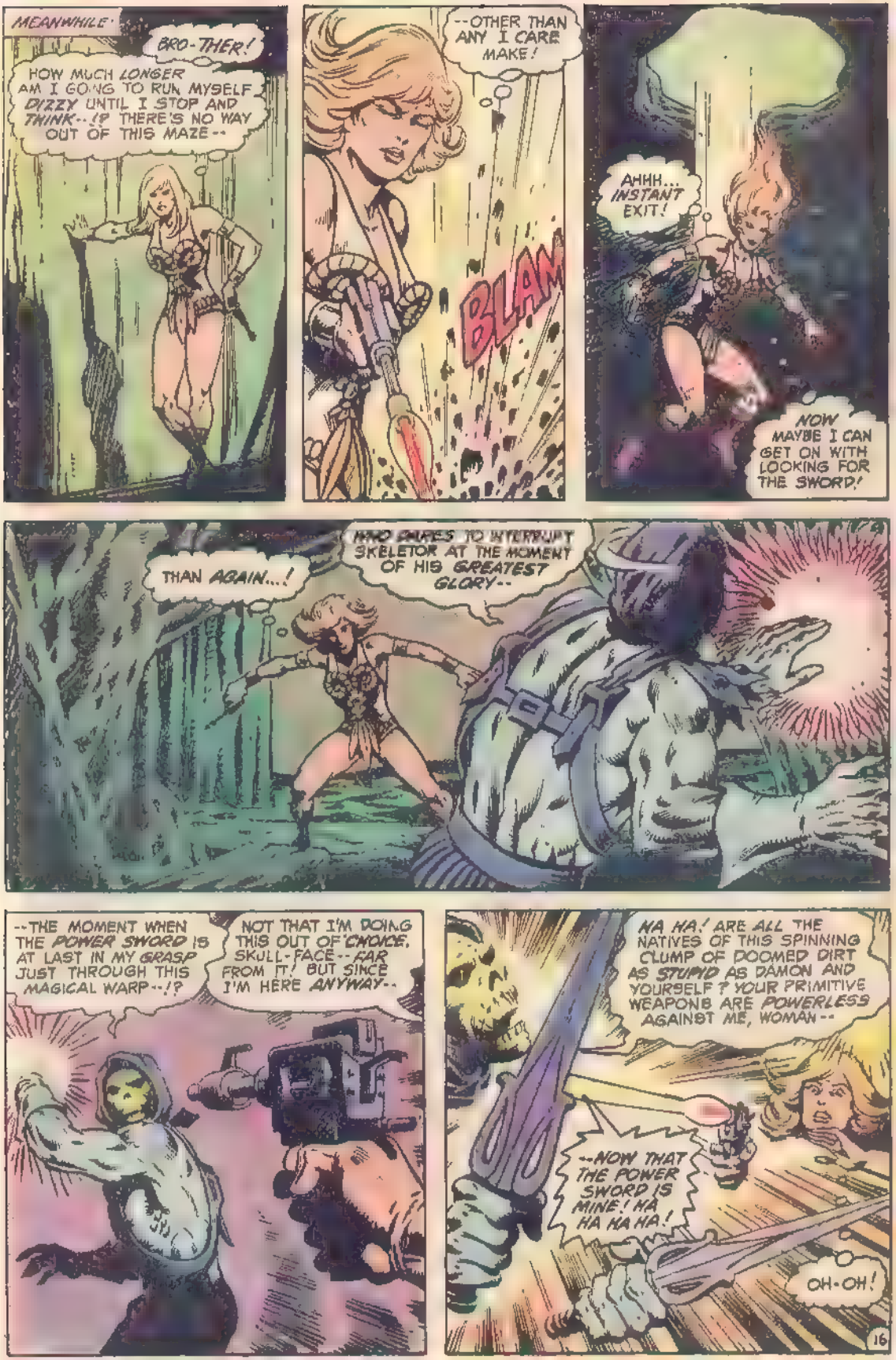
IN.. UGH TIME!

THE SECOND DOOR.
NO NEED TO WONDER WHY I GET THIS FEELING OF UNEASE, IS THERE, GIRL? IT FEELS LIKE I'VE BEEN GOING 'ROUND AND 'ROUND IN CIRCLES SINCE I CAME IN.


SOMEHOW, I DON'T THINK THIS IS THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE TO THE SWORD AFTER ALL.
NOPE NOT AT ALL


HOO-BOY

THE THIRD DOOR.
GODS! NEVER HAVE I LAID EYES ON SUCH A FORMIDABLE COLLECTION OF WEAPONRY! IT'S...IT'S . AWESOME!
SUCH BEAUTY -AND PRECISION .. I COULD NOT EVEN GUESS WHAT SOME OF THESE ARE CAPABLE OF, MUCH LESS THEIR ORIGIN! I MUST HAVE TRIPPED SOME MANNER OF SENSOR!
UGH!
THE FOURTH DOOR.
I LIKE THIS NOT, HE-MAN SURELY WE SHOULD HAVE ENCOUNTERED SOME MANNER OF RESISTANCE ALONG THE WAY! THE CASTLE MUST BE DEFENDED ..
I KNOW, BATTLE CAT... BUT WHY HAVEN'T WE COME ACROSS IT?! IT PUTS ME EVEN MORE ON MY GUARD, BUT WE ARE CLOSE NOW I CAN SENSE IT!
GRRRR! I CAN SENSE MORE THAN THAT, HE-MAN! I CAN TASTE IT-- JUST BEYOND THIS DOOR
STAND ASIDE THEN
--FOR WITH THE ENERGIES THAT CAN ONLY BE TAPPED BY MY POWER VEST, I SHALL MAKE AN ENTRYWAY OF MY OWN--
--AND MAY THE GODS PITY ANY THAT AWAIT ON THE OTHER SIDE!
15


MEANWHILE
BRO-THER!
HOW MUCH LONGER AM I GOING TO RUN MYSELF DIZZY UNTIL I STOP AND THINK--!? THERE'S NO WAY OUT OF THIS MAZE--
--OTHER THAN ANY I CARE MAKE!
BLAM
AHHH... INSTANT EXIT!
NOW MAYBE I CAN GET ON WITH LOOKING FOR THE SWORD!
THAN AGAIN...!
WHO DARES TO INTERRUPT SKELETOR AT THE MOMENT OF HIS GREATEST GLORY--
--THE MOMENT WHEN THE POWER SWORD IS AT LAST IN MY GRASP JUST THROUGH THIS MAGICAL WARP--!?
NOT THAT I'M DOING THIS OUT OF CHOICE, SKULL-FACE--FAR FROM IT! BUT SINCE I'M HERE ANYWAY--
HA HA! ARE ALL THE NATIVES OF THIS SPINNING CLUMP OF DOOMED DIRT AS STUPID AS DAMON AND YOURSELF? YOUR PRIMITIVE WEAPONS ARE POWERLESS AGAINST ME, WOMAN--
--NOW THAT THE POWER SWORD IS MINE! HA HA HA HA!
OH-OH!
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HE-MAN! HA HA HA! WELCOME, FOOLISH BRUTE-- WELCOME TO THE MOMENT MARKING THE DOOM OF ETERNIA... AND THE UNIVERSE IN WHICH IT EXISTS!
I HAVE TRAVELLED THE LENGTH OF THE MULTI-VERSE, WREAKING HAVOC... BRINGING TERROR WHEREVER THE SHADOW OF SKELETOR'S BOOT FELL ACROSS THE COWERING POPULACE. BILLIONS OF SOULS... COUNTLESS WORLDS ... UNIVERSES BEYOND COUNTING... ALL HAVE FALLEN TO MY MIGHT!
OH, BUT NEVER HAVE I HELD SUCH RAW POWER IN MY FISTS! WITH THIS... AHHHH, WITH THIS I COULD CAUSE THE VERY COSMOS ITSELF TO BE GONE-- WITH BUT A THOUGHT!
BHWAAM!
SO COME, HE-MAN ... AND GREET THE DEATH OF... EVERYTHING! HA HA HA HA!

B-BUT... IF THE SWORD WAS ACCESSIBLE TO YOU -- WHY WERE WE NEEDED, DEMON?
I USED YOU, DOLT -- ALL OF YOU! WITHOUT YOUR MUCH APPRECIATED ASSISTANCE I COULD NEVER HAVE LURED RAMON TO ME--
--AND FOUND THE WAY TO THE SWORD!
THIS THRONE NOW BELONGS TO ME -- THE UNKNOWN POTENTIAL OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL IS MINE TO TAP. PERHAPS I'LL... EXPERIMENT A LITTLE BEFORE DRAINING ITS POWER --
..LEAVING YOU... AND YOUR UNIVERSE -- WELL... DEAD!
SWORD OR NOT, SKELETOR, YOU'LL NOT TRIUMPH SO EASILY WHILE I'M STILL ALIVE!
BUT YOU WON'T BE, HE-MAN. I COULD SLAY YOU AS SWIFTLY AS I MAY SUMMON BEAST-MAN AND MAN-E-FACES TO MY SIDE TO DO THE JOB FOR ME!
SOOOO... IT'S HE-MAN, IS IT? GRRRRR -- I'VE LONG AWAITED ANOTHER CHANCE TO GET MY TALONS ON YOU!
HAH! IS THIS THE BEST YOUR MUCH VAUNTED MIGHT CAN SUMMON, SKELETOR? HOW MANY TIMES MUST I DEFEAT THIS MONSTROSITY BEFORE YOU REALIZE HE IS USELESS!
KEEP TALKING, HERO!
P-PLEASE... I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE! WHY WAS I BROUGHT HERE--!
YOU WILL UNDERSTAND ALL SHORTLY, HUMAN -- ONCE MY MAGIC HAS AWAKENED YOUR TRUE NATURE--
-- THAT OF A RAMPAGING, RAGING BEAST! GO NOW -- SLAY HE-MAN!
18

YOU ATTACK LIKE A CUB PLAYING AT WAR GAMES, BEAST! AND I FOR ONE FIND NO PLEASURE IN SPARRING WITH CHILDREN!
WUGHH!
BLONG
THIS ONE, THOUGH, CAN CRUSH YOU LIKE AN INSECT, MUSCLE-MAN!
UGGGH! Y-YOU'RE... GASP... STRENGTH IS GREAT, MONSTER--
-- THOUGH NOT QUITE UP TO THE MIGHT OF MY POWER VEST, I'M AFRAID!
ARRRRRR!!
BWAMP!
NOW, MAD ONE-- IT'S YOUR TURN!
PLEASE... SPARE ME YOUR THEATRICS, HUMAN--
-- BECAUSE, FRANKLY, MY FRIEND--
--YOU ARE IN NO POSITION TO ISSUE THREATS!
BUT I DO ENJOY TOYING WITH YOU BEFORE YOU DIE-- WHICH IS ANY SECOND! EVEN I DO NOT KNOW WHAT AWAITS BENEATH THE CASTLE, BUT I GUARANTEE YOU SHAN'T SURVIVE!
BY THE GODS-- THE FLOOR OPENS UNDER MY FEET--!
19

HE-MAN!
CATCH!
CONSIDER IT CAUGHT, TEELA--
--AND EVEN WITH BUT THIS BRIEF GLIMPSE OF WHAT LIES BELOW--
--YOU HAVE MY UNDYING GRATITUDE!
YOUR WILL IS IMPRESSIVE, HUMAN--!
AYE...BUT THEN, SO ARE MY FISTS!
HE MOVES SWIFTER THAN ANY HUMAN SKELETOR HAS EVER SEEN, AND LIKE A JUGGERNAUT, HE COMES HURTLING AT THE DARK DEMON BEFORE SKELETOR CAN EVEN FORM AN INCANTATION AND UTILIZE THE SWORD!

FAR AWAY, ON ANOTHER REALITY:
IT SWEEPS ACROSS THE DIMENSIONAL PLANES WITH UNERRING PURPOSE. ITS MASTER IS ELSEWHERE--
--AND THOUGH SHE CAN NEITHER MOVE NOR BRING HER OWN MAGICAL FORCES INTO PLAY, STILL DOES SHE BID HIM COME--
--AND THE FALCON OBEYS.
--AND THE FABRIC OF REALITY IS RENT.
TALON TOUCHES FLESH OH SO BRIEFLY--
POOF!
THEY ARE GONE.
PROA BAHH, YOU DEMON! I'VE FELLED LARGER FOES WITH LESS!
UGH!
BAH! I NEED NOT TOLERATE YOUR ABUSE!
I HOLD THE POWER SWORD. ALL I NEED DO IS TURN IT UPON THIS UNIVERSE AND END ITS EXISTENCE...
AND WITH IT, YOU!
21

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

BEHOLD, HE-MAN! WITH BUT THE MEREST THOUGHT, THE SWORD GRANTS ME MY SLIGHTEST WHIM. YOU ARE AS NOTHING BEFORE SUCH POWER!
UNNNH!
LET THE VERY MULTIVERSE TREMBLE BEFORE ME! HA HA HA
I CAN FEEL ITS POWER EVEN NOW, COURSING THROUGHOUT MY BEING... FILLING MY FORM WITH ENERGIES BEYOND IMAGINING!
IT IS... GLORIOUS! THIS OBJECT CREATED FOR GOOD, USED FOR THE ULTIMATE EVIL!
GLOW, MY SWORD--FEED ME THIS WONDROUS POWER--
--SO THAT SKELETOR MAY JOIN THE RANKS OF THE GODS THEMSELVES!
SCREE
EEECH!
REALITY TWISTS UPON ITSELF AND THE FALCON IS THERE, ITS EYES BLAZE WITH RAGE AS IT SPIES THE SWORD.
SKELETOR HEARS ITS HUNTER'S CRY AND WHIRLS, HIS GROTESQUE PARODY OF A FACE TURNING INTO A LEERING, OBSCENE SMILE. WHAT CONCERN IS THIS CREATURE TO THE POSSESSOR OF THE FABLED POWER SWORD--?
HE WILL SLAY THE FALCON. IT IS HIS WHIM... AND THE DEALING OF DEATH, AS ALWAYS, HIS PLEASURE!
22

NO, SKELETOR— YOU'LL NOT USE THE SWORD AGAINST ETERNIA TODAY--
--OR ANY DAY!'
SCREEEEECH!
YOU'LL DO NOTHING, IN FACT, BUT MEET WITH THE BLACKNESS OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS!
THAK!
MY CHAMPION, YOU HAVE MADE YOUR GODDESS MOST PROUD!
GODDESS! YOU ARE SAFE--?!
I WAS NEVER IN DANGER, HE-MAN... THOUGH I COULD NOT COMMUNICATE THAT TO YOU, SKELETOR HELD MY FORM PRISONER, THOUGH HE COULD NOT CONTROL ME--
--NOR HALT THE FALCON FROM FINDING AND RELEASING ME, ONCE HE DID FINALLY BYPASS THE SHIELDS PLACED THERE BY SKELETOR!
ONCE THE FALCON, ZOAR, HAD GAINED POSSESSION OF THE TALISMANS, HE ABLE TO REMOVE ME FROM THE DIMENSIONAL STATIS OF SKELETOR'S MAKING.
NOW THE OTHERWORLDLY DEMON WILL FIND HIMSELF SO IMPRISONED BY MY HAND--
--AND THE SWORD SHALL AGAIN BE PLACED BEYOND THE REACH OF THOSE SEEKING TO USE ITS POWER FOR EVIL--WAITING THE DAY WHEN THE TRUE KING OF ETERNIA COMES FORTH TO CLAIM IT!
AHH, BUT FIRST, I SEEM TO RECALL SOME OF YOUR ALLIES WAIT BEYOND... IN RATHER COMPROMISING POSITIONS. SHALL WE SEE TO THEIR NEEDS, MY FRIENDS--?
END